

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief John R. Batiste



*Office of the State Fire Marshal
State Fire Marshal Michael Matlick*

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Fire Fatality Report For 2007

Fires killed 50 people in Washington State in 2007 State Fire Marshal Michael Matlick announced. The leading cause of fire fatalities is directly related to cigarettes. This was the cause in 9 (or 18%) of the fire fatalities in 2007, and 55 (or 20%) of the fire fatalities over the past five years.

"These fires start when the smoker becomes careless with a lit cigarette. A burning cigarette can cause furniture, bedding or clothing to ignite, starting a fire in close proximity to the smoker. Most often the person who dies in cigarette caused fires is the smoker. " stated Matlick

The majority of the 2007 cigarette related fire deaths occur in homes where people tend to feel the safest. Nearly 71% of these fires occurred in homes with no working smoke alarms. A working smoke alarm can greatly increase your chances of surviving a fire by providing early notification to the presence of smoke and allowing occupants time to escape.

For additional fire safety tips visit the Washington State Patrol – Office of the State Fire Marshal web page at www.wsp.wa.gov or contact your local fire department.

The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington State's firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.

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**PREVENT FIRES
IT'S YOUR JOB!**